THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) Srinagar Airport belongs to the Ministry of Defence and Airports Authority of India (AAI) maintains only a Civil Enclave. AAI has planned the following works for upgradation of Srinagar airport (i) Expansion of Terminal building for handling 600 passengers at a time and (ii) Provision for customs and immigration facilities at this Terminal building suitable for handling limited international charter flights.

Lapses in leasing of TU-154 Aircrafts

1609. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a high level inquiry has been initiated to fix-up the responsibility for the glaring lapses on the part of Indian Airlines pertaining to the non-maintenance of records while leasing of TU-154 aircraft;

(b) if so, whether the Chairman of Indian Airlines has been asked to fix up the responsibility on officers who have caused a loss of Rs. 50.84 lakh to the Airlines by making over payment to the Russian Government;

(c) whether any report has been submitted in this regard, if so, the details of the recommendations; and

(d) what action has been taken against those held responsible?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (d) The case regarding lapses in leasing of TU-154 aircraft is not maintaining the records of delays and cancellation of flights was enquired into by the then Joint Secretary, Civil Aviation. He held four officers of Indian Airlines responsible for dereliction of duties.

No action was recommended against two officers since they had retired by then. It was recommended that charge sheet be issued to one of the officers and the other officer be censured. Accordingly, the then Managing Director, Indian Airlines was directed to take necessary action on these recommendations. On further review of these two cases, the then Managing Director, Indian Airlines found the explanation in one case acceptable and closed the case. In the other case, it was decided to counsel the officer instead of censuring him and thus, this case was also closed by the Indian Airlines.

The above decision taken by the Indian Airlines has been referred to the Government for approval. The matter is under review.

Delayed operations of AI's flights

1610. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Air India flights in India which could not fly on scheduled time during the last one year;

(b) the reasons for delayed take off in each case; and

(c) the steps taken to ensure their operation as per schedule?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) During the period November, 1999 to October, 2000, 2448 Air India flights were delayed at Indian stations.

(b) These flights are delayed due to adverse weather, airport restrictions, technical snags and miscellaneous and consequential reasons.

(c) Air India has taken several steps to ensure their operation as per schedule as (i) all delays are investigated to pinpoint the cause and remedial action is taken wherever necessary; (ii) flight schedule integrity is continuously monitored and the processes/procedures/systems are constantly evaluated, reviewed and upgraded; (iii) Air India's Delay Monitoring Committee meets every day and fortnightly meeting is also conducted with the officers of DGCA to analyse every delay and take preventive actions; (iv) Air India's Technical Cell plans for repair action on aircraft which are known to be coming with a snag. This Cell also looks into the snag which occurs at outstations; (v) periodic refresher training is conducted for Air India's engineers and technicians.

Participation of private sector in management of Airports

1611. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have been actively considering a proposal to include private sector in managing airports in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the AAI have failed to provide technical and infrastructural upgradation of airports in the country; and